

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

AID-20 OMB-01 DPW-01 RSR-01 EUR-25 SR-02 ORM-03 IO-12

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT: SITREP FOR APRIL 25, 1973

FOLLOWING RECEIVED FROM AMCONSUL CAN THO BEING REPEATED

QUOTE

CAN THO 0235

E. O. 11 652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, MOPS, PINT, CA, CB, HU, ID, HU, VS

SUBJECT: SITREP FOR APRIL 25, 1973

1. SUMMAGD: THE LEVEL OF FIGHTING IN MR IV DECLINED SOMEWHAT. ARVN FORCES CLEARED THE VC/ NVA FROM THE LAST CONTESTED STRETCH OF THE MEKONG RIVER NEAR HONG NGU. THE GVN ASKED THE ICCS TO INVESTIGATE A MY THO TERRORIST ATTACK. VC/ NVA INFILTRATION HAS OCCURRED INTO CHUONG THIEN PROVINCE. THE TIDE OF CAMBODIAN REFUGEES INTO CHAU DOC HAS EBBED. END SUMMARY.

2. SECURITY SITUATION: (A) COMPARED WITH THE FIGHTING WHICH HAS TAKEN PLACE IN MR IV DURING THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS, THE LEVEL
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OF ACTIVITY ON APRIL 24 WAS LIGHT. THERE WERE A TOTAL OF 35 INCIDENTS, THE GREAT MAJORITY SMALL ATTACKS BY FIRE. ONLY TWO GROUND ATTACKS OCCURRED. CASUALTIES WERE LOWER THAN PAST LEVELS. MR IV REPORTED 16 KIA, 71 WIA. IT CLAIMS THE VC/ NVA LOST 29 KIA.

(B) THE SECURITY SITUATION IN MR IV WAS HIGHLIGHTED BY THE 9 TH ARVN DIVISION'S SUCCESS ALONG THE EAST BANK OF THE MEKONG RIVER NORTH OF TAN CHAU BUT IN HONG NGU DISTRICT. THE 9 TH DIVISION SUCCEEDED IN DISLODGING THE REMAINING VC/ NVA FORCES WHICH HAVE STUBBORNLY DEFENDED A 1500 METER STRIP ALONG THE RIVER BANK FOR THE LAST SEVERAL DAYS. WITH THE VC/ NVA CLEARED OUT, THE CONVOY FROM PHNOM PENH SHOULD BE ABLE TO RETURN WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT THREAT IN VIET NAM.

(C) MEANWHILE, VC/ NVA FORCES PRESS THEIR OFFENSIVE AGAINST HONG NGU FROM THE NORTH AND EAST. IN THE LAST TWO DAYS, ROCKETS FIRED INTO

HONG NGU HAVE CAUSED SEVEN KIA AND EIGHT WIA.

3. ICCS: (A) A MASSIVE DEMONSTRATION OF A POLICE ESTIMATED 8000 PEOPLE ACCOMPANIED A FORMAL REQUEST FROM THE GVN TO THE REGION VII ICCS TEAM TO INVESTIGATE MONDAY'S BOMBING OF THE VIET MAI RESTAURANT IN MY THO (CAN THO 0230). THE DINH TUONG PROVINCE CHIEF UNDER A POPULAR FRONT REPRESENTATIVE DENOUNCED THE VC'S "HEINOUS ACTS." FAMILIES OF THE VICTIMS GAVE A PROTEST LETTER TO COL. SCRETON, ICCS REGION VII CHAIRMAN THIS WEEK. COL. LOI, CHIEF GVN/ JMC DELEGATE TO THE REGION, PRESENTED THE GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST FOR AN INVESTIGATION.

(B) THE REGION VII CANDEL REPORTS THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS ARE NOW ACCOMPANYING ICCS TEAMS ON ALL INVESTIGATIONS. THE CHANGE IN TACTICS BEGAN SHORTLY AFTER THE LAO BAO INCIDENT. THE CANDEL, WHO IS AWARE OF US DEMARCHES IN BUDAPEST AND WARSAW, WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE THE CHANGE IN TACTICS RESULTED FROM US PRESSURE. HE FEELS CERTAIN, HOWEVER, THE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN DELEGATIONS IN SAIGON WERE EMBARRASSED BY THE STREAM OF REGION VII INVESTIGATIONS IN WHICH THEIR REGIONAL TEAMS DID NOT PARTICIPATE. HE BELIEVES THAT TO SAVE FACE THEIR SAIGON HEADQUARTERS ORDERED THE REGIONAL STAFFS TO JOIN FUTURE INVESTIGATIONS. WHETHER BOYCOTTING OR PARTICIPATING IN INVESTIGATIONS, THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS CONTINUE TO OBJECT TO ANY FINDINGS WHICH STATE OR IMPLY PRG GUILT.

4. COMMUNIST ACTIVITY: (A) THE CHUONG THIEN SECTOR S-2 ESTIMATES SOME 500 NVA HAVE ENTERED THE PROVINCE BY LAND SINCE
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FEBRUARY 1, A HIGH RATE OF INFILTRATION. THE REVELATIONS OF A RECENTLY CAPTURED NVA ILLUSTRATE THE SITUATION. HIS GROUP OF ABOUT 200 LEFT NORTH VIET NAM IN OCTOBER 1972, ARRIVED IN CAMBODIA IN DECEMBER, AND IN CHUONG THIEN IN FEBRUARY. ONLY ABOUT HALF OF THE ORIGINAL GROUP REACHED THE DESTINATION. THE WEAK AND THE LAME WERE LEFT ALONG THE WAY. AFTER TWO WEEKS REST

AND REORGANIZATION NEAR U MINH, HE AND 21 OTHERS MOVED TO SOUTH CENTRAL CHUONG THIEN AND JOINED THE NVA 95 A REGIMENT. THE REST WENT TO THE NORTHERN PART OF THE PROVINCE TO THE 18 B REGIMENT AND TWO SAPPER COMPANIES. THE NVA PRISONER SAYS HE ENTERED CHUONG THIEN BY LAND, PRESUMABLY BY THE 1 C INFILTRATION ROUTE THROUGH KIEN GIANG.

(B) VINH LONG SECTOR INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS SAY THEY HAVE DOCUMENTS WHICH PROVE THAT THE VC HAVE REDRAWN THE EASTERN BOUNDARIES OF VC VINH LONG PROVINCE TO CONFORM TO THE GVN PROVINCE BOUNDARY. IF TRUE, THE VC MAY BE PREPARING FOR A POLITICAL STRUGGLE. APPARENTLY THE DIFFERENT VC AND GVN JURISDICTIONS CAUSED SOME CONFUSION AMONG THE POPULATION. THE CEASEFIRE REGION LINES FOLLOWED GVN BOUNDARIES. IF PROVINCE ELECTIONS ARE HELD, THEY ARE LIKELY TO BE CONTESTED WITHIN THE GVN-DEFINED PROVINCES. THE VC VINH LONG PROVINCE NOW INCLUDES ALL OF GVN SA DEC AND VINH LONG PROVINCES.

5. GVN ACTIVITY: THE GVN REFUGEE MINISTER, DR. DAN, THE CAMBODIAN AMBASSADOR, AND MEMBERS OF THE US MISSION VISITED CAMBODIAN REFUGEE CENTERS IN TINH BIEN, CHAU DOC PROVINCE, APRIL 24. THEY NOTED THE REFUGEES ARE RECEIVING ADEQUATE CARE AND THAT THE FLOW TO VIET NAM HAS STOPPED FOR THE MOMENT. THERE ARE ABOUT 8500 CAMBODIANS IN TEMPORARY SHELTERS; AN ESTIMATED 4000 OTHERS HAVE MOVED IN WITH FRIENDS AND KIN IN THE AREA.
BARNES UNQUOTE
BUNKER

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